

## CLOTHING WORKERS WENT BACK IN SHADOW OF ANOTHER STRIKE, SAYS NEW REPUBLIC

Chicago as a place where labor gets a starvation wage from clothing manufacturers and violence from the police is pictured in an article, "Cheap Clothes and Nasty," in the New Republic this week.

"The clothing workers of Chicago go back to their employers in the shadow, as it were, of another strike," it is stated. "It was said publicly in the early days of the strike that plans were already made to renew the struggle within a year if the workers were defeated.

"The men and women who are going back to work these holiday weeks, bitter and starved though they may be, are not defeated in spirit. They have known for a few months the joy of battle and the exhilarating hope of victory. And, after all, the misery involved in no wages for a few weeks or a few months is not so much greater than the misery of trying to live on a miserably inadequate wage year after year.

"If one must starve there are compensations in starving in a fight for freedom that are not to be found in starving for an employer's profits.

"Chicago should be reminded of the fact that a controversy settled by starvation is still unsettled. A peace that will last has not yet been reached, and preparedness for the next strike is the question of the hour in the clothing trade of Chicago."

There are in Chicago the same sort of "dishonorable slopshops" that Charles Kingsley in London called makers of "cheap clothes and nasty." He charged "slavery, starvation and waste of life" were the cost of ready-made clothes. The New Republic comment on Chicago ready-made clothes is:

"'Cheap clothes and nasty' they remain to this day. Anyone who reviews the long history of overwork and underpay in this industry may be tempted to question whether all

the ready-made garments in the world are worth the misery that is sewed into them.

"Before city council committee incontrovertible testimony of pay envelopes showed weekly earnings of \$2.40 for 32 hours' work, \$2.17 for 23 hours' work, \$1.24 for 17 hours' work, \$1.23 for 13 hours' work, all of which gave convincing proof of the justice of the workers' demands. The only answer of the employers to this testimony was that the lowest earnings did not represent a full week's work, an answer which overlooks the fact that a full week's work at less than 8 cents an hour would hardly net a living wage."

Hart, Shaffner & Marx have signed an agreement with the union, it is noted. The whole clothing trade will be a dirty mess until the Kuppenheimers, Rosenwalds and Lindenthals of the Wholesale Clothiers' ass'n agree to deal with their workers as Hart, Shaffner & Marx are doing.

"Another significant fact about the present strike has been the opposition of the mayor of Chicago to the clothing workers and his acquiescence in the unfair treatment of the strikers and strike sympathizers by the police. As is usual in such cases, the strikers have been charged with violence, but real violence may also be charged to the police themselves and the hired 'gun-men' employed by the manufacturers.

"Some of the girl strikers arrested were too young to be 'booked' in the police stations and were finally taken as delinquent girls to the Juvenile Detention home. And yet the police were afraid of the 'violence' of these young girls!"

—o—o—

Richard Bussler suing Hall-Borchert Dress Form Co., 169 N. May, for injuries he says he received in falling in unprotected elevator shaft,